

guide means "to become elastically deformed during the card eject operation to move the locking portion away from the recess of the card" during card removal. During card insertion the locking piece moves "toward the card by an elastic recovery force to engage the locking portion in the recess of the card."

As shown by way of example in Fig. 7 and explained in the related text of the application, guide surface 61 of guide hole 60 in metal cover 3 forces elastic locking piece 50 to become elastically deformed as a card is ejected. As shown in Fig 10 and explained in the related text, guide surface 61 permits "elastic recovery force" to cause locking portion 50c to engage recess 18 of the card as the card is inserted.

According to the Examiner, Komatsu disclosed a card connector comprising an elastic locking piece (11) that becomes "elastically deformed during card ejection" and becomes "released from the elastic deformation during card insertion." (April 29, 2003 Official Action at page 3.) Applicants respectfully disagree.

There is no teaching Applicants can find in Komatsu that indicates engagement pieces 11 of Komatsu operate under an elastic force. As is shown in Fig. 9 and 10 of Komatsu and the related text, engagement pieces 11 seem to be hinged to guide 9 and to be free swinging in either direction, as shown in Fig. 3. As the card is ejected, pieces 11 are permitted to swing into relief portions 76, allowing pieces 11 to avoid a recess in the card. But, pieces 11 are not "elastically deformed" in this operation as is required by claims 1-9 of the application.

During card insertion, pieces 11 are forced into engagement with recess 81 (see Fig. 4), but this is not the result of "elastic recovery force" as is required by claims 1-9.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-8 and the allowance of claims 1-9 based, at least in part, on the foregoing distinction over Komatsu. Moreover, new independent claim 9 also contains an additional recitation of a "spring member" that is not shown in Komatsu.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

If any extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is required to obtain entry of this response, and not requested by attachment, such extension is hereby requested. If there are any fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or 1.17 that are not enclosed, including any fees required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, please charge those fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: July 23, 2003

By: 

John M. Romary
Reg. No. 26,331

FINNEGAN
HENDERSON
FARABOW
GARRETT &
DUNNER LLP

1300 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202.408.4000
Fax 202.408.4400
www.finnegan.com

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please add new claim 9 as follows:

9. (NEW) A card connector for accepting a card and holding it in a connector housing, wherein the card has a recess in its side surface, the card connector comprising:

an eject mechanism including an eject member, a spring member disposed between the eject member and the connector housing and a locking mechanism for locking the eject member, the eject member being adapted to move in a card insertion direction causing an elastic deformation of the spring member as the card is inserted into the connector during a card insertion operation, to be locked by the locking mechanism, and to move in a card eject direction by an elastic recovery force of the spring member in response to a card eject operation to eject the card;

an elastic locking piece, accommodated in a space formed in the eject member, having a locking portion to engage a single side of the card in the recess of the card and a stationary portion fixed to the eject member; and

a locking piece guide means, formed in the connector housing, for guiding the elastic locking piece during the card eject operation and the card insertion operation wherein the locking piece guide means causes the elastic locking piece to become elastically deformed during the card eject operation to move the locking portion away from the recess of the card and wherein the locking piece guide means causes the elastic locking piece to become released from the elastic deformation during the card

FINNEGAN
HENDERSON
FARABOW
GARRETT &
DUNNER LLP

1300 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202.408.4000
Fax 202.408.4400
www.finnegan.com

insertion operation thereby causing the elastic locking piece to move toward the card by an elastic recovery force to engage the locking portion in the recess of the card.

FINNEGAN
HENDERSON
FARABOW
GARRETT &
DUNNER LLP

1300 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202.408.4000
Fax 202.408.4400
www.finnegan.com